



Singing Frogs Farm

Community Supported Agriculture

August 31st, 2022

Crew Member Profile: Bo!

Bo (short for Boden) joined our farm just over a year ago, August 2021 after graduating from CalPoly in Ag and Env Plant Sciences. (We seem to have a steady stream of awesome crew from this CalPoly program.) No only that but he had worked on a couple southern CA farms and helped run the Student Experimental Farm at CalPoly. One of his frustrations was trying to get regenerative and permaculture techniques implemented there only to have them be plowed under.

Bo jumped to working and learning on our farm at a full run and hasn't yet stopped. He has an amazing energy and is happy to push forward large projects of necessary field work or take on solo projects such delivering your CSA boxes to Santa Rosa, hedgerow pruning, weed whacking, rodent management and recently managing our compost piles. As a simple example of his enthusiasm, he was the one crew member excited to help Elizabeth get a skunk out of a trap at risk of getting sprayed (note we only stunk slightly). Bo definitely gets the "most pep in his step" award on our farm this year. Check out Bo front and center in this Oct '21 crew shot. We're all excited about the Chioggia Beets but he even more so, front and center.



Bo also has a tremendous amount of social capital. In fact he came here referred by a prior crew member and he has brought a crew member (Iz) to our farm. He often will come to Elizabeth with, "I have this friend who..." and makes a proposition. And most of these propositions have benefitted the farm.

After a day of working on the farm Bo often heads to the coast to surf or plays soccer. He is also a drummer and until recently played on the band "The Cloeys".

A History of Lettuce

We have some lovely heads of light green **Panisse Lettuce** for you today. This is one of our favorite lettuce heads, an oakleaf. It has lovely light textured and flavored leaves and it grows well throughout the year and creates a luscious salad.

I had a moment of wonder while writing this newsletter about the history of oakleaf lettuce. I didn't find too much on them (developed from French varieties), but I found an intriguing history of lettuce.

Lettuce was first grown and developed by ancient Egyptians as early as 2700 BC. It was linked with Min, the god of fertility for whom it was a sacred food and associated with sexual potency. It's milky sap and seeds were used in medicine,

cooking and mummification. Eventually it was bred to have fewer bitter leaves. At this time, it was tall and upright, with separate leaves rather than heads. Next the Greeks learned of it from Egyptians and used it medicinally as a sedative and started the tradition of serving a salad of lettuce at the beginning of meals to help with digestion. It was still linked with fertility and physical love (Adonis was killed in a bed of lettuce by a boar sent by the jealous Artemis). The Romans took it from here, they named the plant "lactuca" meaning "milk" for its white sap. Lactuca became Lettuce but the scientific name still stands *Lactuca sativa*. We have many varieties of "Romaine" lettuce including our Mini Romaines such as the Gem Lettuce Families are getting today and all of you did last week. In AD 77 Pliny the Elder recorded numerous cultivars in his *Natural History*. Lettuce traveled through Western Europe with the Romans and east all the way to China. In the 1400s, heading lettuces, such as butterhead and crisphead were developed in Europe and by the 1600s we start to see firmer-headed lettuces such as red and green oak leaf and curled leaf lettuces. France, Holland and Italy were the main centers of this breeding work. Thank you *Mother Earth Gardener* for most of these details.

This Week's Box

Panisse Lettuce

Toscano Kale

Colored Tomato Quart

Summer Squash

Jalepeño Peppers

Cherry Tomatoes (SR) OR Strawberries (WC)

Parsley (SR) OR Chives (WC)

Family: Gem Lettuce & Green Cabbage

Produce Notes & Recipes!

This week we're fully into our **Heirloom Tomatoes!** You each have a box with a few red slicers and Heirloom red Moskvich to give a nice rainbow. Here's a little bit on most of our varieties.

Cherokee Purple are a pre-1890 Cherokee Indian Heirloom; deep dusky purple-pink color, superb rich flavor. Classic old-time tomato flavor.



We love the orange Dr Wyche so we've planted quite a few and at least 1/2 of you have one this week. This tangerine-orange fruit, has a smooth texture and tropical, sweet taste. Slightly acidic.

Yellow Azoychka is a Russian Beefsteak Heirloom with it's sweet, citrusy, complex flavors, slightly acidic. Brought to the States in the 90s by the Seed Savers Exchange.



Prudens Purple is an early Brandywine, one of the few we can get to ripen in our cool valley bottom. These large fruits are more pink than purple and have a sweet heirloom flavor.

Green/multicolored Malakhitovaya Shkatulka come from the Ural mountains, meaning "Little Malachite Box". The flesh is very flavorful, very fruity and a little smoky. They make an excellent addition to artful display of tomatoes.



Summertime Green look unripe, but interior flesh may have a little pink blush. Flavor is well balanced and sweet, juicy and fruity. This is a new tomato for us this year and so far we like it. These will be one of our latest.

This week's **Toscane Kale** is a super luscious, it's the first cut of these plants that we plan to take us through winter.

Kale and Parsley Salad (modern farmer)

- 1 bunches Toscano kale, stems and ribs removed, leaves cut into 1/4-inch ribbons (about 4 cups)
- 1/2 bunch flat-leaf parsley, leaves removed and finely chopped (about 1 1/2 cups)
- 5 ounces good-quality feta cheese, crumbled
- 1/2 cup walnuts, toasted and chopped
- 1/4 cup walnut oil or extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 shallot, minced (about 2 tablespoons)
- Juice of 1/2 lemon (about 2 tablespoons)
- 1 tsp za'atar
- 1/2 tsp coriander seeds, lightly toasted and crushed
- 1/2 tsp ground allspice
- 1/2 tsp ground cumin
- Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

1. In a large bowl, combine kale, parsley, feta, and walnuts. In a small jar, combine oil, shallot, lemon juice, za'atar, coriander, allspice, and cumin;

shake well to emulsify. Add a few tablespoons of dressing to salad and mix well with your hands; continue to add dressing and toss until desired flavor has been achieved. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

Elizabeth's note: I would absolutely add chopped heirloom tomatoes or cherry tomatoes to this salad!

Everyone has 3-4 **Jalepeño Peppers**. As with many spicy peppers their spiciness varies tremendously. You might have one that's almost mild and another that's knock-your-socks-off. Heat will mellow them out. They also keep really well (like a month well) so put them in the fridge and use a little bit at a time. Generally we only give hot peppers out to CSA 2-3 times over a summer but we do leave them on as add ons. Starting next week we'll have them on their bulk incase you'd like make hot sauce.

I was thinking they would go great with Zucchini bread or Tortillas/Pancakes/Fritters. On the latter, I found a fun recipe from [The Kitchen Paper for Jalapeño Chive Zucchini Fritters](#) but they are very very similar to my recipe of Tortillas de Zucchini we included in the Aug 3rd newsletter so I will focus on the bread here.

Jalapeño Summer Squash Chive Quick Bread

- 1 1/3 cups all-purpose flour
 - 1 1/4 teaspoons baking powder
 - 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
 - 1/2 teaspoon salt
 - 1/4 teaspoon ground cumin
 - 2 eggs
 - 3/4 cup granulated sugar
 - 1/3 cup vegetable oil
 - 1/3 cup sour cream
 - 1 3/4 cups shredded summer squash aka yellow squash
 - 2 or 3 jalapeño peppers ~ 1/4 c, seeded and chopped
 - 2 Tbs chopped fresh chives (optional)
1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Lightly grease and flour an 8 1/2- X 4 1/2- X 3-inch loaf pan.
 2. Whisk together flour, baking powder, baking soda, salt, and cumin in a large bowl.
 3. Whisk together eggs, sugar, oil, and sour cream in a medium bowl. Stir in shredded squash, jalapeño peppers and chives (if using).
 4. Add wet ingredients to dry ingredients and stir to combine until just moistened.
 5. Spread batter evenly in prepared pan. Bake for 1 hour or until a toothpick or cake tester inserted in the center comes out clean.
 6. Cool bread in the pan for 10 minutes. Remove bread from pan and cool completely on a wire rack.



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